



Quick Reads

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Accreditation

The [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB) is exploring challenges and opportunities related to the accreditation of health departments that serve populations of fewer than 50,000 people. Although several health departments of this size have attained PHAB accreditation, PHAB has heard from other health departments that there is a need to hold some discussions about the barriers they face.

PHAB has created a think tank to advise on this issue and two representatives from Iowa have a seat at the table. Louisa County Health Department Director Patti Sallee and Laurie Walkner from the University of Iowa will work with PHAB over the next year. To learn more about this project, see the latest edition of the [PHAB e-Newsletter](#).

Healthiest State Walk

The fifth annual [Healthiest State Walk](#) is coming up October 7th. This year, the Healthiest State Initiative is partnering with the State Fire Marshal Division to keep Iowans healthy and safe. Iowans are encouraged to celebrate the Healthiest State Walk and National Fire Prevention Week by planning a fire drill at the same time as your 1-kilometer walk.

Again this year, I'll be participating in the IDPH Healthiest State Walk. Come join our team by [registering](#) to participate today.

Surgeon General's marching orders

U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, has announced a call to action to make American cities more 'walkable.' Dr. Murthy said walking is a simple, affordable way to get exercise, but only if people have a place to do it. This emphasis on creating safe and accessible walking routes in communities is central to the Iowa Department of Public Health's (IDPH) [Iowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit](#) (I-WALK) program. I-WALK is a Safe Routes to School initiative designed to promote walking and biking to school; however, creating safe routes benefits everyone in the community.

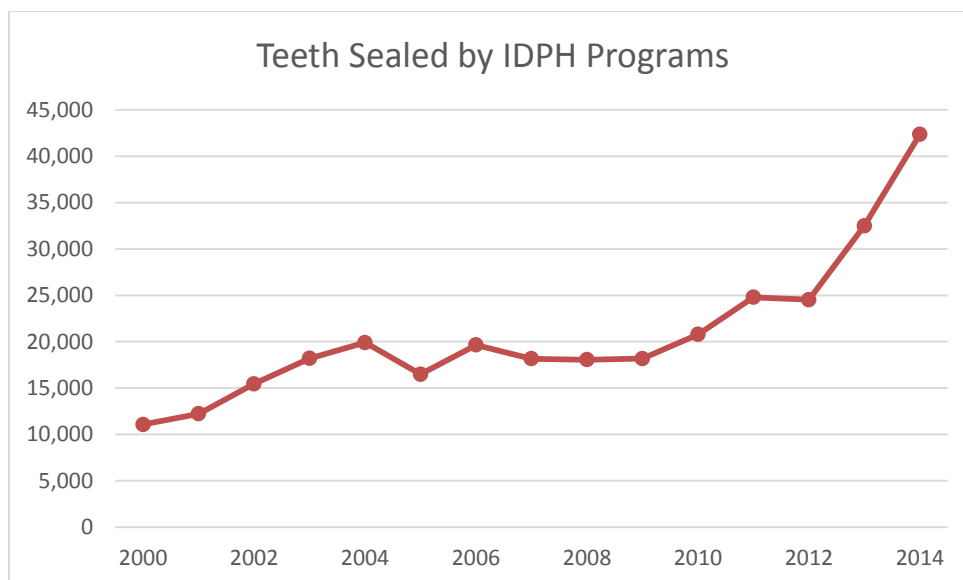
One I-WALK success story is in Buchanan County. I-WALK merged with the Buchanan County Trails association and collaborated with City of Independence, Independence Schools, Independence Parks and Recreation Department, Buchanan County Conservation and Buchanan County Roads Department to make several improvements, including:

- Identifying a school bike route with bike lanes painted and stop signs placed/relocated for safe biking to the school campus.
- The school campus added trails through the collaborative efforts of the Buchanan County Trails Association. Additionally, a trail leading to the school has been cleaned up and paved. The school administration redirected flow of traffic on the campus to make it safer for pedestrians and have future plans for additional rerouting of traffic.
- The City of Independence has revisited its policy regarding sidewalks in new construction areas which had been waived for a number of years.
- Bike racks have been installed strategically in the city.
- A church walks their religion classes from school each week. A bike rodeo has been held for Independence 3rd graders for three years with information sent home to all parents. Students attending the Bike Rodeo receive a new bike helmet and flashing reflectors to attach to their bicycle or to themselves. In addition, any elementary student in need of a bike may request one from a local church. The church received funding from a community foundation to provide this service.

Monthly data snapshot

Data are essential to the practice of public health. Each month, Quick Reads highlights selected tidbits to help create awareness of IDPH data and epidemiology. To discover more of the important and useful data available from IDPH, please visit the [Public Health Data Tracking Portal](#).

Oral Health – Dental Sealants



The number of sealants placed on children's teeth as part of IDPH programs has nearly doubled in the last three years. Sealant programs have been shown to be an effective and cost saving strategy to stop tooth decay in children. IDPH's [Sealant Program](#) targets schools with more than 40 percent of students on Free and Reduced Lunch.

For more information about the IDPH Dental Sealant program, contact [Stephanie Chickering](#).

Congrats and kudos

Congratulations to the [IDPH Colorectal Cancer](#) program, which received the highest score of 63 applications nationwide in the [Organized Approach to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening](#) grant application. Only 30 programs were awarded grants. The program seeks to raise Iowa's colorectal cancer screening rates to 80 percent by 2018 and to 83 percent by 2020.

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To everyone in public health and all our partners, keep up the great work!

— Gerd